

General Principles

- Improve the pedestrian amenities in the District, which could include trees, street furniture, hanging flower baskets, better lighting as identified by the South Downtown Lighting Plan, landscaping, and public art.
- Maintain a high standard for street level activity from abutting buildings: ground floor retail that is transparent from the street, commercial activity interacting with the street, and other design components that keep the street active.
- Create a safer pedestrian environment for our residents, visitors, and employees through urban street calming measures: street lights, signage, reconfiguration, the streetcar.
- Improve our neighborhoods’ alleys: eliminate dumpsters, repaving, lighting, create activity in the alleys.
- Improve connections between the District and other surrounding communities: gateway elements, public art, improving King Street Station, developing parking parcels between 4th and 5th avenues, extending the streetcar.
- Move forward with developing the Green Streets in the neighborhood – Main, Maynard, and part of Weller.

Merchants displaying their products on the sidewalk enliven the neighborhood, however better attention to detail and design can enhance the urban environment.



- Improve the connection between Little Saigon and Chinatown/Japantown: improve the I-5 underpass with public art and a possible open air market, as well as encourage development on Jackson and King street between the I-5 freeway and 12th avenue.

Summary

The Neighborhood’s section examined several zones of activity in the District and offers recommendations for several specific streets. This section seeks to tie those ideas together through an overall streetscape plan that considers District-wide patterns, while taking locations of open space into account.



The Dragon has been used as a symbol to represent the Neighborhood in various public art pieces.

This section was informed by a streetscape survey of the District, which included all existing street trees, sidewalk widths, pedestrian amenities, lighting, public art, and a number of other factors. Public comments from four workshops, the Community Advisory Board, and other outreach efforts were also included in this inventory. Notes from those workshops and meetings can be found in the appendix.

Streetscape Definition

The streetscape lies in the public right of way between two building facades. It is composed of the street, sidewalks, lighting, planting, furniture, public art, and other elements. It is also a public utility corridor for utility lines, stormwater and sewer lines, traffic, and garbage collection. The success of the streetscape is largely determined by activities that occur in the private realm bordering the street. Activities like shopping, personal services, and dining enliven the street, drawing more customers and people into the public realm, thus increasing public safety. This consequently creates a mutually beneficial situation for businesses, residents, employees, and visitors to the community.



Well-designed signage can not only enhance the storefront of a business, but improve the streetscape of a community.

Existing Conditions

The District shows two dominant street patterns. In Chinatown and Japantown, blocks are built at a human scale and treated with plenty of pedestrian amenities. The Little Saigon neighborhood, on the other hand, is dominated by large blocks built at an automobile scale with not as many pedestrian amenities as the other two neighborhoods. The Existing Conditions Map on page 29 illustrate these differences.

The Chinatown and Japantown areas have more secondary streets (in the blue) that tend to be more pedestrian friendly by nature than arterials (shown in red). In addition, they have had some streetscape enhancements as a result of earlier planning efforts. These areas, for example have "Asian style" pedestrian lighting and phone booths. Honey Locust street trees (with a few exceptions including Jackson, which have Japanese Walnuts) are the primary tree in this area.

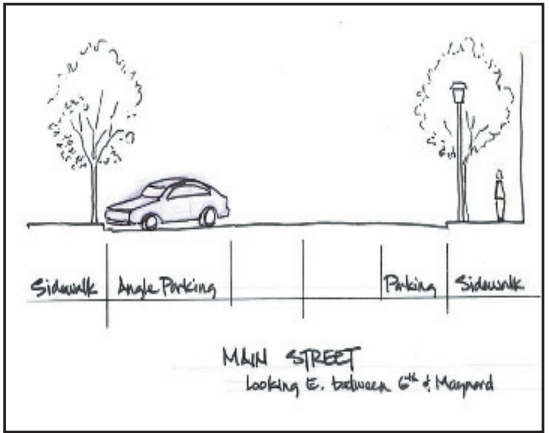
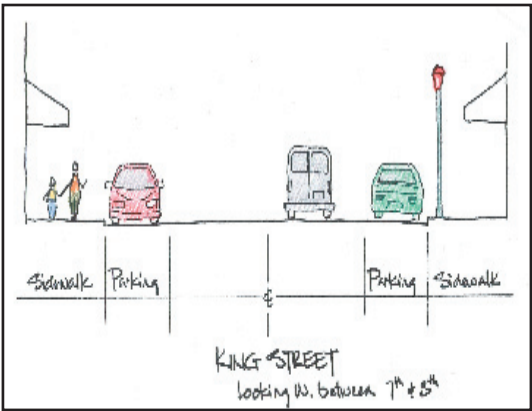
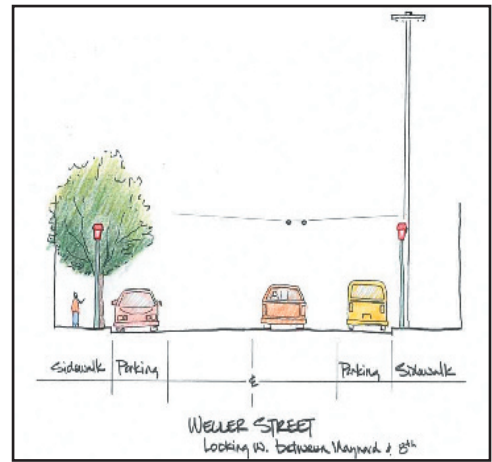
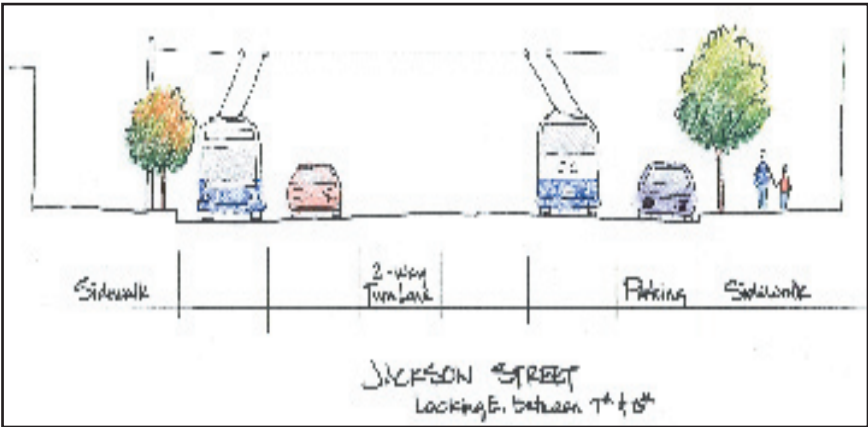
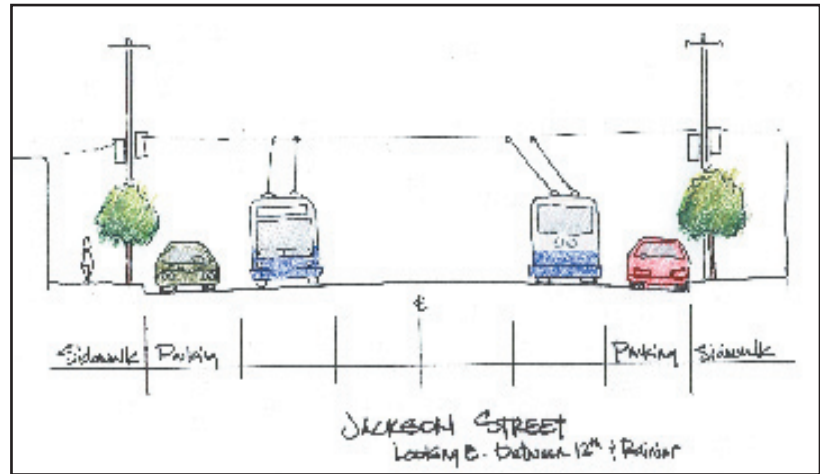
Many street corners, especially along Jackson, have curb bulbs with decorative brick inlay to enhance pedestrian safety. However, to some, the current surface treatment at these curbs may look dated (not to be confused with traditional), consequently a new design of these spaces may be in order as we progress into developing new areas within the District. All of the developed open space and nearly all the existing housing in the District lie in the area west of I-5.










In contrast, the streetscape in most of Little Saigon is not pedestrian friendly. Various locations within the area tend to be connected primarily by arterials. The long blocks in the neighborhood discourage pedestrian activity by limiting path choices. These streets also lack pedestrian amenities and are dominated by industrial and warehouse activities not compatible with pedestrian movement. Streetscape improvements are already needed on both Jackson and 12th Avenues shopping areas and will be needed elsewhere as development and land use changes occur.

Finally, the outdoor public lighting in this community

does not provide good visibility for pedestrians. According to an NBBJ lighting study, the problem lies in the fixtures and light source utilized by our pedestrian level lighting, as well as the spacing and scale of these light poles. To improve the community's lighting condition, we should use different fixtures that will produce less glare and greater visibility, install induction fluorescent lamps which performs better and has four times the longevity as a standard high pressure sodium lamp, and finally, space these light poles closer together and to the ground. However, the design of any new light fixture should also be sensitive to the neighborhood it is serving. Any standard new light fixture should receive the approval of the International Special Review District.

Sections of Weller, King, Main and Jackson



- Legend**
-  2-30
 -  Open Space
 -  Surface Parking
 -  Seattle City Center Transit District
 -  Existing Street Front
 -  Proposed Street
 -  City/Block Front
 -  Secondary Streets
 -  Arterials

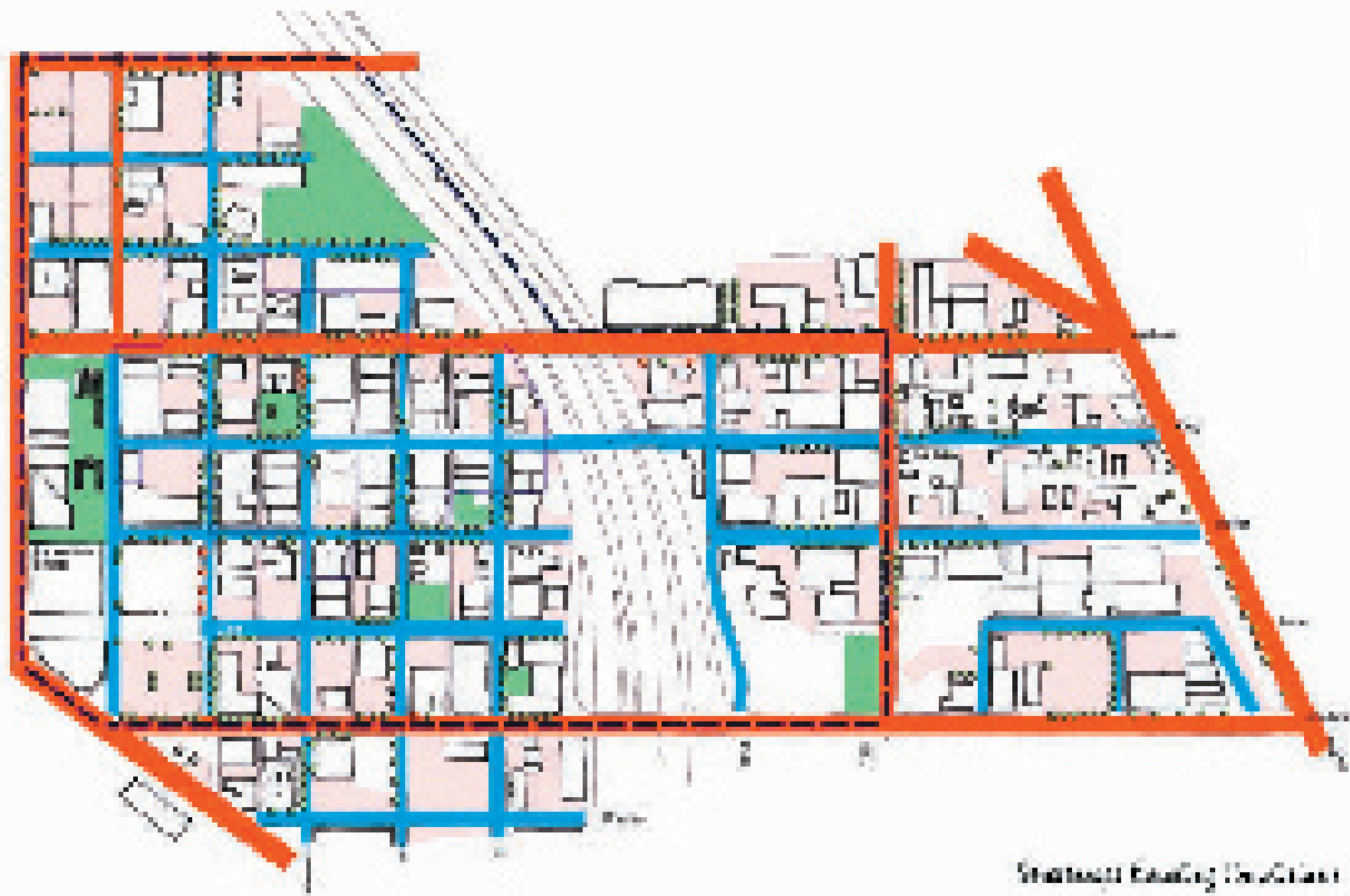


FIGURE 12 Seattle City Center Transit District Boundary and Proposed Street Network
 Source: Seattle City Center Transit District, "Map of the District" (2010).
 Adapted from: Seattle City Center Transit District, "Map of the District" (2010).



Street Layout Existing and Proposed
 District Boundary, 10th Avenue
 District Boundary, 10th Avenue
 District Boundary, 10th Avenue

Alleyways

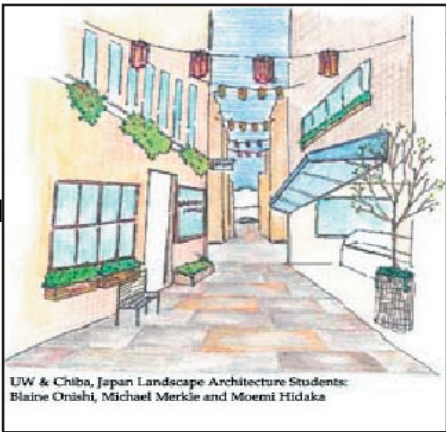
Unkempt alleyways have always been an area of contention in many communities, including Seattle’s Chinatown neighborhood. Chinatown’s alleyways occasionally have public safety issues and are avoided by many individuals unfamiliar with the neighborhood’s terrain.

However, other communities throughout country have dealt with this problem. Pioneer Square has recently developed a program to clean-up their alleyways, as well as wanting to activate them in the future. San Francisco’s Chinatown spent years working with business owners and the city to develop their alleyways to the point where they currently have walking tours specifically designed for them (<http://www.adoptanalleyway.org/cats/>). Other North American communities like Victoria’s Chinatown and Post Alley in Seattle’s Pike Place market utilize their alleys for commercial activities.

Seattle’s Chinatown consequently has an opportunity to develop a program where we can develop these alleyways that are clean, dumpster free, designed in an aesthetic fashion, and possibly activated. The Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area has partially cleaned up the alleyway between King/Weller Street and 6th/Maynard Avenue. However, this should be considered a first step in several into making our alleyways active, unique



Most alleys in Chinatown have several dumpsters and they are often unkempt.



An example of what our alleyways could look like

and safe. In the 2002 spring UW Landscape Architectural workshop, several students developed models for what alleyways could look like. Although these models may not be applicable for the neighborhood’s alleyways, it shows the high level of interest that our alleyways have produced for many individuals who would like to see these spaces changed for the better.

The following steps can expand on the current BIA model of cleaning up our alleyways:

- 1. Implementation of providing dumpsters at the end of alleyways (current BIA model).
- 2. Discussing the need for restaurants to use



- compactors and having daily or twice a day pick-ups.
- 3. Resurfacing the alleyways – asphalt, concrete or brick.
- 4. Possibly, looking at public art and/or landscaping areas of the alleyways.
- 5. Activating certain alleyways if it is feasible

Street Trees

Several blocks in the area do not have trees. Trees, however, are one way of improving the appearance and feel of a street. It is recommended that new developments plant trees along the block of their building. It is also recommended that the type of trees planted should have some relation to the culture of the neighborhood it is being installed in. In Chinatown, for example, Honey Locust are planted in several blocks in that neighborhood, however it would be more culturally sensitive to see Gingko Biloba or Chinese Pistache planted, considering that these trees originated in China. In the recommendation section, we have listed a number of trees that can be planted in this District and their country of origin. However, the trees, more importantly, should look attractive, provide good shading, have a long leaf season, and are durable for this climate. Finally, tree grates describing the area and/or tree should be installed with the planting of the tree.

Transit

In the very near future, the area between 2nd and 5th and Jackson, between Pioneer Square and the Chinatown/ Japantown - International District will become a transit hub that includes every major form of public transportation in the region including: Metro bus service, Sound Transit’s Light Rail and Commuter Rail Services, Amtrak, the Monorail, and the Waterfront Streetcar. Pedestrian activity will sharply increase in the area.



Other non-motorized vehicles should be supported, such as bicycles. Bicycle racks can be installed at strategic locations within the District.

Developing 5th Avenue into an attractive street is important, since 5th avenue will be the first impression of the community for transit users. It is also the corridor connecting the District to the City's government center. We should enhance the facades of buildings on that street and improve the street level retail bays.

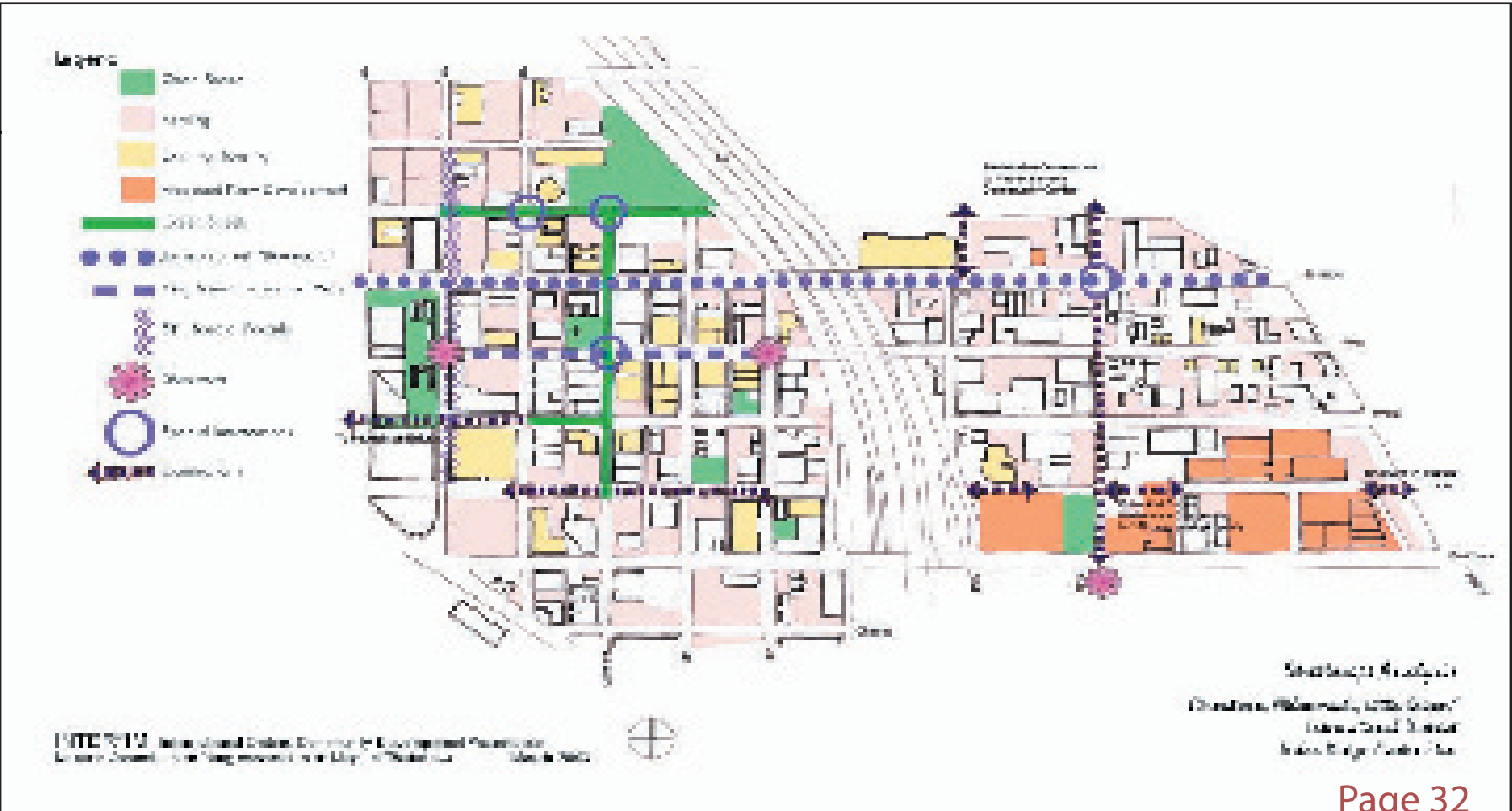
Jackson Street is also another important street for public transportation in our community. In the Chinatown/ International District Neighborhood Plan, the extension of the Waterfront Streetcar was recommended. The Waterfront Streetcar has been cited by a number of community members in the urban design process as an important component in enhancing Jackson Street and developing better connections of the Little Saigon/ International District neighborhood with Jackson Place and/or First Hill, as well as connecting Little Saigon with Chinatown and Japantown. In addition, the extension of the ride free zone to 12th avenue on Jackson Street has been a very high priority by the Little Saigon community.

Streetscape Analysis Map

The city has already designated "Green Streets" (shown in green) on Main and Maynard, as well as Weller Street. These streets are intended to have more pedestrian amenities and landscaping than most common pedestrian corridors. Large blocks of orange indicate new development, providing the opportunity to make improvements and connections as part of the construction.

The map shows a number of connections that could be made to help strengthen the pedestrian experience: these are illustrated as dark dashed lines often with arrows at the ends. Streetscape types are not differentiated for these connections. The following section diagrams are intended to show the general character of different streets in the neighborhood.

Finally, an urban street functions well when there is a lot of activity in abutting buildings. Consequently, a high standard for street level activity from adjacent buildings should be encouraged whenever and wherever possible. Ground floor retail that is transparent from the street, commercial activity interacting with the public right-a-way, and other design components that keep the sidewalk active are ways to improve the streetscape.



Analysis and Recommendations

The Neighborhood section provided specific conclusions and recommendations based on a variety of activities occurring in the District. The following analysis aims to connect those ideas by taking dominant streetscape patterns and other public planning into account. Enhancing pedestrian amenities along corridors that connect important destinations like parks and community facilities can strengthen existing pedestrian oriented streets. We need to look for potential opportunities to break down long blocks and scale, provide more pedestrian amenities, increase activity at the street level, and create more connections and open space in areas that need a strengthened pedestrian environment.

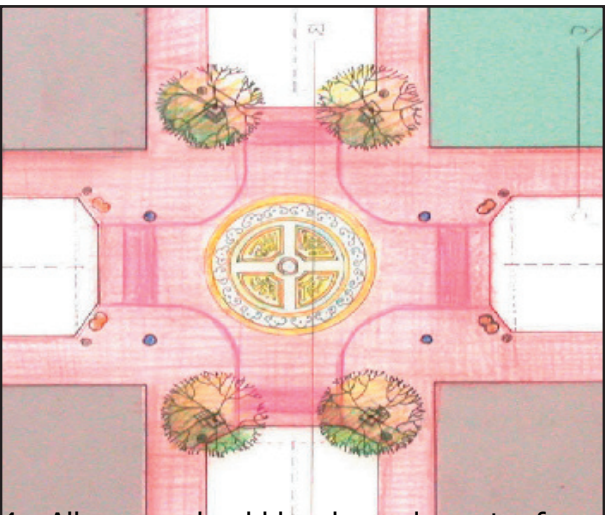
Several recommendations came out of the Neighborhood section that the streetscape plan can build upon.

Chinatown

1. Special attention should be given to the building facades and land uses along 5th Avenue South.
2. King Street should be pedestrian oriented with gateways at 5th and 8th and a “town square” at the intersection of King and Maynard.
3. Develop a public art project along King Street, between



the two gateways, highlighting Chinese-American culture and history. Utility poles can be painted, the surface of the sidewalks can integrate public art features, and historical and/or cultural markers can be placed at various locations along the length of the street.



UW student Sophia Ho's rendition of what the town square may look like

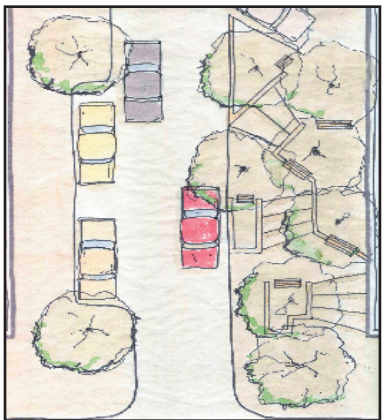
4. Alleyways should be clean, dumpster free, and possibly activated. Look at programs like San Francisco's Chinatown as a template to clean up our alleyways.
5. Strengthen connections along Weller, Maynard and Lane Streets to Hing Hay Park the new Community Center, the Bus Tunnel Lid, the Wing Luke Museum, and Children's Park with various pedestrian amenities like enhancing the walking surface, landscaping, signage, and public art.

Japantown

1. Main Street should be a park-like green street (it is already designated as such), featuring the intersections at 6th/ Main with public art and Maynard/Main

as a park-like plaza. This could be done through, paving, public art and other wayfinding elements. These elements should help newcomers to the area understand its historical significance.

2. Work on and extend the green street on Maynard Street from the Danny Woo Garden to Hing Hay Park. Look at installing tree pods, mid-block cross-walk between Jackson Street and Main Street, and other landscape features on Maynard Street.
3. When the area between 4th/6th Avenue and Yesler/Jackson streets is developed, the streets should include trees, lighting, furniture, and public art consistent with the rest of the community. The intersection of Main



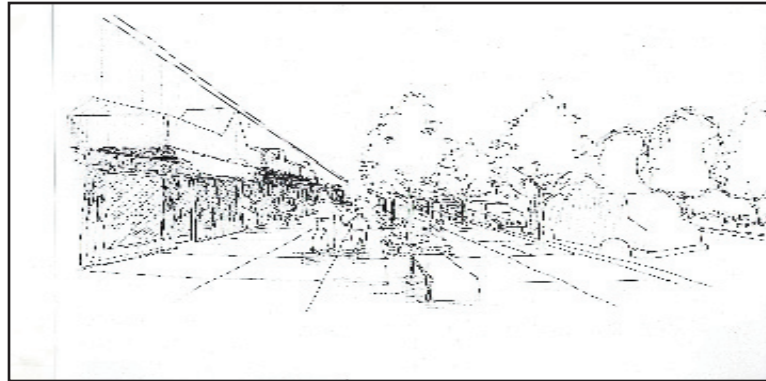
Aerial view of Maynard Street - a green street. Picture drawn during a 1998 design workshop for the neighborhood plan

and 5th could become a node of activity and commerce which announces Japantown and provides a visual connection to the Government Center to the north, Pioneer Square to the west and the rest of the District to the south. This node of commerce with preferably sustainable development principles, can offer a mix-use of pedestrian oriented activities.

4. Parking should be veiled to maximize the pedestrian experience.
5. May add steps, street furniture and landscaping to help people climb both Maynard and Seventh Avenues and incorporate playful treatment of stormwater in fountains and water features. These can be related in concept to Japanese character, fish, and other aquatic natural systems. Handrails can be affixed to buildings to assist people climbing these hills.
6. Develop a public arts plan around Main Street and 6th Avenue to highlight Japanese-American culture and history.
7. Continue use of honey locust as the street tree in this area along Main Street. Possibly, plant Cherry Trees on that street.

Little Saigon

1. The intersection at 12th and Jackson should be highlighted with public art. In addition, as buildings redevelop, developers should help create more public space at the various corners of this intersection.
2. Improvements should further strengthen the image of Jackson Street as a boulevard, including possibly integrating the streetcar.
3. A textured mid-block crosswalk on Jackson Street between Rainier Avenue and 12th Avenue south can be created to increase pedestrian safety in the area, as well as improve the streetscape.
4. Banners highlighting the Little Saigon neighborhood can be posted on 12th Avenue and Jackson Street.
5. Public art features can signify that one is entering the District at the neighborhood's various points of entry.



Rendition of Jackson Street in Little Saigon - Nakano Associates

A drawing by Nakano Associates, displaying how a street can be developed to accommodate more greenery, different surfaces, active retail spaces, and additional street furniture. As stated by the Seattle Department of Transportation, all new landscaped areas needs to be maintained by abutting property owners. In addition, a certain amount of unobstructed lateral width along the sidewalk needs to be maintained.

